

BLAIR WRESTLING

January 2026 Newsletter

Dear Friends of Blair Wrestling,

I hope everyone is doing well! We are heading into the home stretch of the season with Wyoming Seminary at their place on Saturday, February 7 at 1 p.m. I wanted to provide a quick recap of the recent dual meets we have had with three nationally ranked teams. They've been exciting to say the least.

Blair vs. St. Peter's Prep: Win 57-6

Last week, we had a dominating win over one of the top teams in New Jersey on January 23. Several wrestlers stepped up and dominated in a big way, and I'd like to highlight them.

Wyatt Stauffer '28 has been wrestling at 120 lbs. all season, and we recently moved him up to 138 pounds, where he faced one of St. Peter's Prep's best competitors. Wyatt lost in the ultimate rideout against a really good opponent on the mat. As a team, we always talk about finding ways to take advantage of opportunities, and Wyatt did exactly that. When he had the chance to wrestle, he showed great effort and positive attitude, stepping up for whatever the team needed. You will continue to hear more about him.

Ryan Meier '26 continues to emerge as a leader on our team. One of the best parts of teaching and coaching is being able to witness an athlete's mental and physical development. Ryan has grown up to be a young man, and he's more than ready for college. Ryan avenged an earlier loss in the year to one of St. Peter's best wrestlers. He won in the ultimate rideout, and was able to execute tough rides to get it done. You will hear more about him later as well.

Benji Koch '26 had a gritty win in this dual, coming back and putting on a good ride to finish the match. Benji works hard every single day, and as we head into this final stretch, I'd love to see him stay open-minded and trust himself a bit more—letting loose and fighting through positions that make him

uncomfortable. As always, Benji leads through his actions. His habits and way of life serve as a model for our team: Staying true to who you are.

Blair vs. Greens Farms Academy: Win 38-14

Coming from Connecticut, Greens Farms (GFA) is a team that many people don't know about, but they are really tough every single year, ranked 30th in the country. I knew they were going to be tough. They have some one-year seniors/post-graduates who wrestled in this event, so I knew we had our work cut out for us.

Finn O'Brien '28 is one of the most knowledgeable wrestlers on the team, and though he is new to Blair, he has been wrestling for a long time. He's learning about himself each day. Finn is a perfectionist, and so he always wants to win and get it done. One of Finn's goals is to gain a deeper perspective on his wrestling, one that focuses on letting loose and showing who he is for the entire match. Finn beat a tough opponent in overtime that he will see most likely at National Preps later on. It was a nice win that he needed, and he will continue to get better and be ready for National Preps. He is a competitor and a worker.

Joe Schinder '27 is starting to find his stride, his ceiling is high, and he's starting to understand how good he can be as he gets better with each match. Joe beat another tough opponent from GFA. Like Finn, he's very driven to win, and he is learning to focus on the immediate wrestling situation, establishing positions and getting takedowns, which will result in achieving mat success.

Overall, we had some gritty, hard-fought matches that we won, albeit narrowly. I didn't think we wrestled great across the board, but that happens sometimes. I felt that the matches this



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weekend provided solid preparation for the next match with Delbarton.

Blair vs. Delbarton: Win 37-22

This was a match we lost at Delbarton last year but it was truly a good learning experience in many ways. Delbarton is an exceptional team, having just beaten Faith Christian. They came into the match ranked third in the country, are the top team in New Jersey, and have a lineup full of nationally ranked wrestlers and New Jersey state champs and place-winners. Dual meets are exciting and different from a tournament in that not only are there individual matches, but there are also lineup strategies that have to be considered to maximize the team score. Successfully executing these strategies requires complete commitment from our team members and sometimes even sacrificing personal preferences in support of the larger team goal. I'd like to highlight some of the guys from the dual.

Eric Bocanegra '27 wrestled free and relaxed, once again showing discipline in his matches. Eric has a huge heart, and he's learning how to put it on his opponents by getting to his strengths more often. He also is a fierce competitor, and his match was a dominating win. There are still small details that he needs to address in his top wrestling, which we will do this week.

Wyatt Stauffer '28 stepped up and weighed in at 132, getting a tech fall in this match. He is starting to find his stride, and he's starting to learn how good he is. With Wyatt wrestling at 132 lbs. in this dual, we were able to bump Vin Anello up to 138 lbs. Wyatt executed his fakes and control ties well.

Weston Borgers '28 was down early in the match, but he made some mid-match adjustments that were impressive, including scoring with three reversals. He was able to do this because he's loose and happy about wrestling. His riding is improving, too, as he is doing a better job driving with his knees, feet, chest and hips. The longer the matches are for Weston, the better for him. His win proved pivotal for the dual.

Ryan Meier '26 continues to impress all of us, and his attitude is really the reason he's improving and making jumps. We had to make a game-time decision in the upper weights, as we worked to position ourselves to win the dual. We moved Ryan up to 190 lbs. against a formidable opponent (ranked 5th nationally), and he gave up a major decision, but he battled. Ryan is a natural 175-pounder. Being able to roll with immediate changes and having a positive attitude is the epitome of mental toughness. Ryan will be looking to win an individual national title and team national title at Preps.

Final Thoughts

Anytime you win, it feels good for a short time, and then you prepare for the next competition. The positive attitudes of our wrestlers are contagious. It helps everyone improve, bounce back from tough matches and, as a coaching staff, we're seeing this happen more and more. Our athletes are thriving on opportunities to wrestle the most outstanding teams and wrestlers in the country. They are smiling more and having fun. It is infectious, and I think we are starting to find our stride at the right time. Thank you to everyone for making Thursday night a memorable one for the kids and Blair.

Best,

Ross Gitomer